

MELBOURNE RECITAL CENTRE

2026 Baroque Competition Guidelines

Current at February 2026

The Competition

Melbourne Recital Centre's Baroque Competition is dedicated to young musicians passionate about the works of the Baroque era. The competition repertoire will consist of any works written between 1600 – 1750 not exceeding 10 minutes in total duration. The Performance Final will be held at Melbourne Recital Centre on Saturday 30 May 2026.

Date: Saturday 30 May 2026

Venue: Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, Melbourne Recital Centre

Time: 3:00 – 5.30pm

The competition winners will be announced, and their prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the Performance Final.

Eligibility

The Melbourne Recital Centre Baroque Competition is open to:

- soloists and ensembles of up to five members
- any instrument/s
- permanent residents or citizens of Australia, or New Zealand citizens living in Australia
- 17 years of age and under (at 1 January 2026)
- minimum performance level of AMEB Grade 5 or equivalent is expected

The competition is not open to established professional musicians, regardless of meeting the other eligibility conditions. The short-listing panel may deem an applicant professional at their discretion.

Please note – past winners of the First Prize (previously named the Richard Mills prize) of the Bach or Baroque Competitions are not eligible to enter.

Key Dates

- Applications Open: early Feb 2026
- Applications Closing Date: Wednesday 15 April 2026 at midnight (late applications will not be accepted)
- Finalists notified: Friday 24 April 2026
- Announcement of finalists: Monday 4 May 2026
- Performance Final: Saturday 30 May 2026

Prizes

Prizes applicable to all entrants:

- First Prize: \$4,000
- Encouragement Awards: two prizes of \$2,000 each

Additional prizes may be offered. The Jury reserves the right not to award any prize.

First prize includes an interview with the artist/s on 3MBS FM Radio, alongside the delayed broadcast of the Competition Concert for Sunday 7 June 2026.

Applications

Applications consist of completing the online registration and uploading the application items.

Registration

Applicants must complete the on-line registration form available on the Melbourne Recital Centre website. No faxed, posted or emailed applications will be accepted.

Submission of Application Items

You will be required to submit the following items through the online registration. If you have issues with uploading any of these items, please email learning@melbournerecital.com.au

- link to unedited video recording(s) of music no longer than 10 minutes duration (acceptable format is YouTube or Vimeo link ONLY, and video pauses between movements are acceptable)
- a copy of the score of the work/s performed on the audio/video recording in PDF format
- biography – a description of the applicant's musical training, achievements and interests written in the third person (approx. 70 words)
- an image of the applicant in JPEG format

Application Guidelines

- the registration and application must be submitted through the online registration by persons over 18 years of age i.e. parent / guardian / teacher
- applications must be received by Melbourne Recital Centre no later than Wednesday 15 April 2026 at midnight
- emailed, posted, hand-delivered or faxed entries will not be accepted
- late applications will not be accepted
- only one application is permitted per applicant
- no competitor/s will be allowed to compete under any name other than that submitted in their application

The Jury

The Jury will consist of a panel of music industry figures. The Jury reserves the right to appoint a Co-Adjudicator, or Assistant, or substitute Adjudicators when necessary. Any contestant who makes an attempt or on whose behalf an attempt is made to communicate with any member of the Jury before the completion of the competition may be disqualified. The decisions of the Jury are final and may not be challenged on any grounds.

Audio-Visual Recordings

The video recording you submit must include not more than 10 minutes of musical material. Acceptable formats are YouTube or Vimeo link ONLY. No editing of the footage is permitted although stops between movements are OK. Please allow adequate time to upload your footage to YouTube or Vimeo.

Repertoire

Any works composed between 1600 – 1750 not exceeding 10 minutes in total duration. Arrangements for modern instruments will be accepted, however pianists will be required to play works in their original form, with pieces for clavichord and harpsichord accepted on piano. Arrangements by Liszt, Busoni etc. will not be accepted. Please specify on the online registration the exact timings of all repertoire. The jury reserves the right to disqualify contestants who run over time or who do not meet the above repertoire requirements. Repertoire changes by the student are not permitted once an application has been submitted. Applicants who are selected for the Performance Final may be asked to perform a selection from their submitted repertoire. If you have questions about your selected application repertoire, please email learning@melbournerecital.com.au before submitting.

Accompanists

If required, competitors must provide their own accompanist at their own cost for the final concert held on Saturday 30 May 2026. The jury reserves the right to disqualify any finalist arriving without an accompanist. Please note, your accompanist does not form part of the application and will not be eligible for any prize monies.

Withdrawals

Finalists who do not intend to compete in the Final performance must notify Melbourne Recital Centre to that effect at least 48 hours before the commencement of the Final.

Copyright and Printed Material

The competitor must use original material copies or authorised photocopies for performances (authorised photocopies must be accompanied by a letter from the Publisher or Copyright Holder). Photocopies provided for the Jury are permitted and will be destroyed by Melbourne Recital Centre after use. This rule is in accordance with the directions of the Australian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society and Copyright Agencies Limited, and no variations will be permitted. Melbourne Recital Centre holds a One Music licence.

Practice, Warm-Up & Rehearsals

A dedicated on stage rehearsal time, and practice/warm-up room will be available at Melbourne Recital Centre on the day of the Final at times to be advised to finalists.

Order of competing

Finalists must perform in the order in which their names appear in the program unless officially authorised or directed otherwise. If not present when called upon, finalists may be disqualified. Finalists are expected to attend for the entire duration of the Final and will not be permitted to leave early for other commitments, including any other performances.

Personal Presentation

The Jury expects the behaviour of competitors and audience to be appropriate to the occasion. Offenders may be removed from the hall. All competitors are requested to dress appropriately in neat and formal performance attire.

Feedback

Providing competition feedback to finalists is at the discretion of the adjudicators after the conclusion of the competition. Requests for feedback can be made through learning@melbournerecital.com.au. Feedback will not be given for non-finalists.

Insurance

Melbourne Recital Centre requires all finalists to be responsible for insuring their instruments for damage arising out of participation in the Competition.

Cameras, videos, and mobile phones

The use of any of the above by members of the audience during the competitions is strictly prohibited. Phones must be turned off while in the performance spaces. Offenders may be removed from the auditorium and film or recording destroyed.

Broadcasting

Melbourne Recital Centre or its agent reserves the right to record, broadcast, telecast or video tape any item of the Competition. In 2026, performances will be audio recorded for delayed broadcast. By submitting your application, you have automatically granted permission for audio, video, digital images or photographs to be used for promotional or marketing purposes.

Acknowledgements

The prize winner shall for a period of two (2) years after the date of the receipt of a Competition prize, include an acknowledgement in their curriculum vitae, biographical notes and performance programs.

The Baroque Competition is generously supported by Mrs Margaret Ross AM and Dr Ian Ross, and Martine Letts.

Presented by Melbourne Recital Centre in association with Competitions Media Partner 3MBS Melbourne.